

## INSIDE TODAY

## WORLD NEWS

## BOMB TARGET



A Shiite man flagellates himself during the festival of Ashura in the Shiite city of Najaf, 100 miles south of Baghdad, Iraq, Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2009. Bombs targeted Iraqi Christians and Shiite Muslims Wednesday, killing at least several people and wounding about three dozen before coinciding religious observances that will take place under heavy guard.

Read more on Page A7

## SPORTS NEWS

## STERIOD STORY



New York Yankees' Alex Rodriguez, from the Dominican Republic, looks on during a press conference in Santo Domingo, Sunday, Dec. 6, 2009. Rodriguez, the famous baseball star, is visiting the country to attend the 2nd Annual David Ortiz Celebrity Golf Classic, a tournament dedicated to raise funds for pediatric care purposes.

Read more on Back Page

# Storm snarls travel in West, Midwest

KRISTEN WYATT

Associated Press Writer

OMAHA, Neb. — A major winter storm is promising to bring a white Christmas to much of the nation's midsection, though countless holiday travelers faced slick roads and scattered flight delays and cancellations Wednesday that only looked to get worse.

Snow was forecast across a large swath of the Plains and the Midwest, with a foot or two possible by Christmas Day. The storm also was expected to dump sleet and heavy rain as it treks eastward. Blizzard warnings were likely on Christmas Eve in Kansas.

"This is a huge system," said Rick Hiltbrand, a meteorologist with National Weather Service in Chanhassen, Minn. "It's just going to kind of sit there through the weekend."

By late Wednesday morning,



Brent Levander watches as his brother, Brian, hooks a chain to the bottom of a vehicle as they work to right it after a driver lost control and rolled into a ditch while traveling on U.S. Highway 281 north of Hastings, Neb. Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2009. Freezing drizzle combined with heavy snow has made travel dangerous in south central Nebraska.

parts of Nebraska were coated with ice that was up to 1/4-inch thick. At Betty's Place

restaurant in the tiny town of Bruning, cook Randy Yaney said "ice pellets" falling from

the sky were just beginning to turn to snow.

Continued on Page B3

## Balloon boy parents get jail time, tough probation

P. SOLOMON BANDA

Associated Press Writer

FORT COLLINS, Colorado (AP) — The parents who carried out the balloon boy hoax were sentenced to jail Wednesday and given strict probation conditions that forbid them from earning any money from the spectacle for four years.

Richard Heene was sentenced to 90 days in jail, including 60 days of work release that will let him pursue his job as a construction contractor while serving his time. His wife, Mayumi, was sentenced to 20 days in jail.

Richard Heene choked back tears as he said he was sorry, especially to the rescue workers who chased down false reports that his 6-year-old son had floated away in a balloon on Oct. 15. It was a stunt designed to generate attention for a reality TV show.

"I do want to reiterate that I'm very, very sorry. And I want to apologize to all the rescue workers out there, and the people that got involved in the community. That's it," said Richard Heene. His wife did not speak at the hearing.

Larimer County District Judge Stephen Schapanski then ordered Heene to begin a 30-day jail term on Jan. 11, delaying the start of the sentence for two weeks so he can spend the holidays with his family. Schapanski allowed Heene to serve the remaining 60 days of his jail term under work release, meaning he can work during the day but spend his nights in jail.

Continued on Page 5



Richard Heene, center, looks up as he sits in the courtroom with his wife Mayumi, right, and attorney David Lane, left, before he and his wife were sentenced in connection with the balloon boy hoax on Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2009, in Fort Collins, Colo.

Associated Press





# Guantanamo may have to stay open until 2011

LARRY MARGASAK

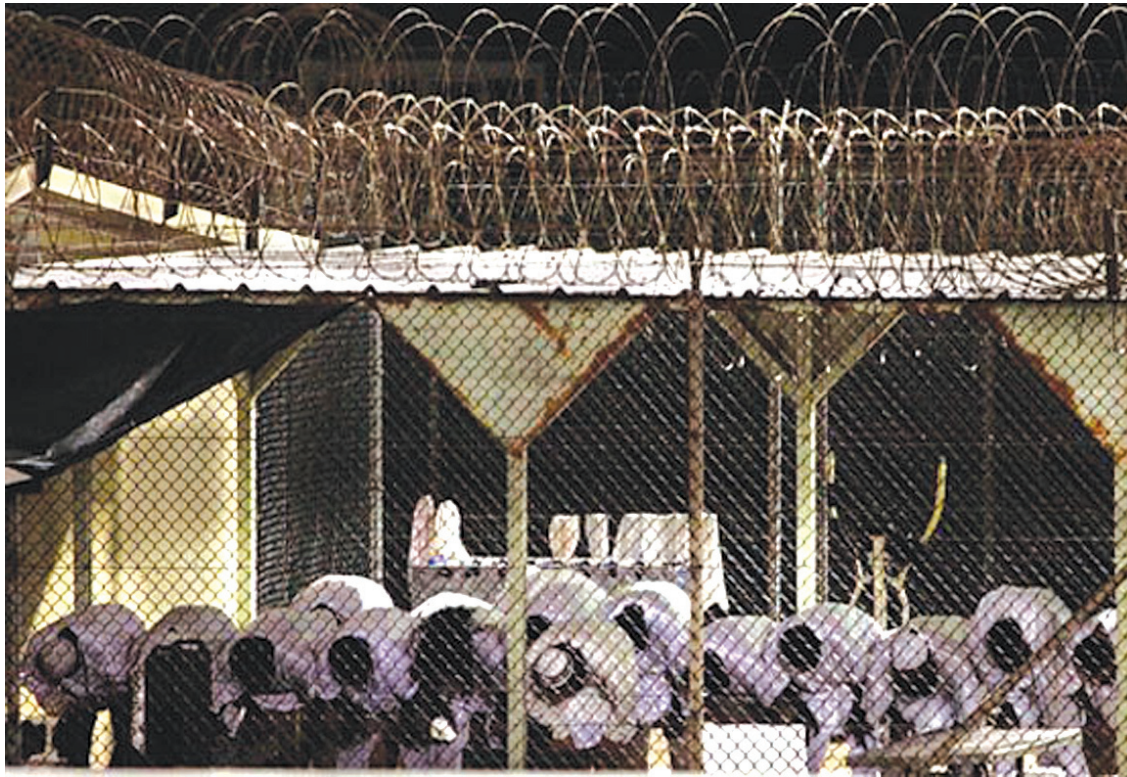
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, may not close until 2011 because of anticipated appropriation struggles in Congress, the need to change federal law and construction time to upgrade an Illinois facility to hold detainees. The Thomson Correctional Center may not be purchased from the state until March and will need up to 10 months of construction said Joe Shoemaker, spokesman for Sen. Dick Durbin, who represents Illinois in the Senate.

Congress must appropriate the money for the takeover and construction, and lawmakers wary of moving detainees to the United States could balk at approving the funds. In the Senate, there always is a chance of delaying tactics by senators that could hold up the money for months.

President Barack Obama originally said Guantanamo would close next Jan. 22. While that date proved unrealistic, the president has directed administration officials to move quickly to acquire the maximum security Thomson facility.

White House spokesman Ben



In this file photo taken Thursday, May 14, 2009 and reviewed by the U.S. military, Guantanamo detainees pray before dawn near a fence of razor-wire inside the exercise yard at Camp 4 detention facility, at Guantanamo Bay U.S. Naval Base, Cuba.

Associated Press

LaBolt on Wednesday would not say when Guantanamo would close.

He told The Associated Press, "The president remains as committed today to closing the detention facility at Guantanamo as he was when he entered office, and substantial progress has been made in recent weeks. The detainee population at Guantanamo is now smaller than it has been

at any time since 2002.

"We will work with Congress to ensure that we secure the necessary funds to purchase and upgrade the Thomson prison, which will operate at a substantially lower cost to taxpayers, next year."

Shoemaker said, "The end of 2010 or the start of 2011 has always been the mark the administration talked to us about." In addition to any

appropriations struggles, current federal law requires that detainees can be housed only inside U.S. borders while their trials are pending. That law would have to be changed to cover detainees who have not yet been charged and will not be sent abroad. The change would have to specify that detainees could be kept on U.S. soil for any purpose.

The Justice Department said

last weekend that since 2002, more than 560 detainees have left the military prison in Cuba and 198 remain

"We're hitting the anticipated bumps" in the timetable for using the Illinois facility, Shoemaker said.

He added that many lawmakers would not vote to change the law or provide the funds until the administration submits a comprehensive plan on the handling of the remaining prisoners.

Federal officials tried on Tuesday to allay fears that moving terror suspects from Guantanamo to Illinois could make the state a terror target.

The director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Harley Lappin, told a state legislative panel that a new perimeter fence and other measures would make Thomson Correctional Center "the most secure of all federal prisons in the country."

The 12-member Commission on Government Forecasting and Accountability could vote on a recommendation to sell the prison that skirts the Mississippi River, but the governor does not have to follow the recommendation.

The commission said it would not vote on the proposal before Jan. 14. □

## Watchdog faults U.S. anti-drug effort in Afghanistan

MATTHEW LEE

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department's internal watchdog criticized the agency's nearly \$2 billion anti-drug effort in Afghanistan for poor oversight and lack of a long-term strategy.

The department's inspector general said Wednesday the Afghanistan counternarcotics program is hampered by too few personnel and rampant corruption among Afghan officials.

The inspector general's report also noted that despite a consensus among U.S. agencies that eradicating poppy fields is essential, the focus has shifted to interdiction of drug organizations and alternative crop projects. That shift is advocated strongly by Richard Holbrooke, the Obama administration's special envoy for Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The 69-page review also said U.S. embassies in Afghanistan and Pakistan are not adequately coordinating the program's activities. It recommended that the State Department set out clear guidelines for measuring success, boost staffing and improve interagency cooperation.

"The department has not clarified an end state for

counternarcotics efforts, engaged in long-term planning, or established performance measures for its multipillared approach to counter poppy cultivation and the resultant illegal narcotics industry," the report said.

Afghanistan is the world's leading producer of opium poppy and extremists use drug proceeds to finance their fight against U.S. and other foreign troops.

The report also said that as the U.S. military tries to break the link between the narcotics industry and the insurgency, the State Department's role in the anti-drug effort will change and that no plans are in place to prepare for that.

"Although the department is planning new counternarcotics actions ... there is no agreement on appropriate roles for either civilian agencies or the U.S. military," it said. "The department has also failed to plan for transitioning responsibility to the Afghan government, should U.S. government funding not be sustainable at current levels."

The report allowed that the program has made "some progress" but said "successes are difficult to quantify due to imprecise measurement and

transnational factors." It also said the department's "lack of meaningful performance measures adds to the problem."

Making matters worse is a lack of supervisory personnel to monitor \$1.8 billion in counternarcotics program contracts at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, the report said.

"Contract and program management is thus conducted from many thousands of miles away in a different time zone," it said.

The inspector general pointed out that an apparent disagreement between the U.S. embassies in Kabul and Islamabad contributed to poor coordination.

"This lack of cooperation is due, in part, to embassy Islamabad's conclusion that there is no connection between illicit narcotics and the insurgency in Pakistan," it said. "However, the porous border between the two countries means that actions in Afghanistan will certainly spill over into Pakistan."

"Coordination is lacking on key issues, such as increasing security along the lightly controlled, porous border between Afghanistan and Pakistan," the report said. □





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Mon. Dec. 28 from 10 am - 10 pm  
Tue. Dec. 29 from 10 am - 10 pm  
Wed. Dec. 30 from 10 am - 10 pm

## WINTER STORM

### Continued from Front Page

While standing in the barren restaurant, he saw a tree limb crash to the ground in a nearby park.

"The roads are just ice," he said.

Slippery roads were blamed for at least three deaths. A Colorado woman was killed Tuesday when her SUV apparently hit black ice and slid across a median in western Nebraska. The Kansas Highway Patrol said an eastbound car on Interstate 70 in Thomas County spun out of control Tuesday night, crossed the median and was struck by a westbound tractor-trailer, killing both people in the car.

South Dakota Gov. Mike Rounds declared a state of emergency Tuesday. The National Weather Service in Sioux Falls warned of treacherous travel conditions from Wednesday through Friday night, calling the storm "life threatening."

Jim Myers, who stopped Wednesday at a service station off Interstate 29 in Sioux Falls as he drove from Cheyenne, Wyo., to Hancock, Minn., said he noticed numerous cars that had gone off the road and into the ditch.

Blustery weather already had snarled traffic in Arizona, with blizzard-like conditions shutting down roads and causing a pileup involving 20 vehicles Tuesday. South of Phoenix, a dust storm set off a series of collisions that killed at least three people.

A tropical jet stream pumping in moisture from the storm's south was likely to cause plenty of snow as the storm headed into the Plains and the Midwest. Heavy rain was possible in the Mississippi and Ohio valleys and the Ozarks.

Winter storm warnings stretched from Colorado through the Dakotas and into Minnesota on Wednesday.

They also were issued for parts of the Four Corners region. By midmorning, snow was falling along Colorado's Front Range. The heaviest accumulations were around Greeley and Fort Collins, where up to 5 inches had fallen.

No major airport delays were reported in Denver, where about an inch had fallen, but travelers across the region were warned to check with their airlines before arriving for flights.

More than 100 flights were canceled at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport and delays were about 30 minutes, said Gregg Cunningham, a spokesman for the Chicago Department of Aviation. At Midway International Airport, delays averaged 30 minutes and more than 20 flights were canceled.

The Federal Aviation Administration reported minor

delays elsewhere.

Travelers scrambled to adjust their plans before the worst of the storm hit.

"I was going to wait a little longer but when I woke up this morning I heard on the news that it was only going to get worse and worse, so I hit the road earlier than planned," said Rachel Ahrens, of Papillion, Neb., who stopped for gas Wednesday off Interstate 80 in Des Moines, Iowa, on her way to Ames, Iowa.

The winter blast follow a weekend storm that dropped record snowfall and interrupted holiday shopping and travel on the East Coast. Tens of thousands of customers in West Virginia and Virginia remained without power Wednesday.

Holidays travelers and commuters alike were stranded in the Northeast on Wednesday after an electrical



Snow and ice cover parts of a highway sign as traffic travels west on Interstate 70 on Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2009 west of Hays, Kan. A winter storm has set its sights on Kansas with blizzard conditions expected this evening and tomorrow.

Associated Press

problem forced Amtrak to halt trains in and out of New York's Penn Station. The outage affected service as far south as Washington, D.C.,

and as far north as Boston. Power was restored after about three hours, but it wasn't immediately known how long delays would persist. □

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# THUNDER N LIGHTNING

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# Elated Senate Dems ready to pass health care



Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nev. gestures during a health care rally on Capitol Hill in Washington, Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2009. From left are, Senate Banking Committee Chairman Sen. Christopher Dodd, D-Conn. Reid, Senate Finance Committee Chairman Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., and Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee Chairman Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa.

*Associated Press*

ERICA WERNER,  
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Exultant Senate Democrats prepared to deliver a Christmas Eve win to President Barack Obama with passage of landmark health

care legislation that would extend coverage to 30 million Americans.

Powerless to stop it, Republicans stepped up their attacks, contending the sweeping bill threatened

to harm Medicare and add billions to the deficit.

“Tomorrow the Senate will vote on a bill that makes a bad situation worse,” Sen. Charles Grassley, R-Iowa, said on the Senate floor Wednesday, the 24th day of debate on the 10-year, nearly \$1 trillion bill. “This bill slid rapidly down the slippery slope to more and more government control of health care.”

Democrats begged to differ. “Senate Democrats are poised to pass historic health reform legislation on Thursday that will extend affordable, quality coverage to millions of Americans in a fiscally responsible way. Our bill saves lives, saves money and saves Medicare,” Senate leaders said in a statement.

At the White House, press secretary Robert Gibbs declared, “Health care reform is not a matter of if, health care reform now is a matter of when.”

Obama himself said the Senate legislation accomplishes 95 percent of what he wanted. “Every single criteria for reform I put forward is in this bill,” the president told The Washington Post.

But even if the Senate approves the legislation, it can’t go to Obama for his signature until Congress resolves differences between the House and Senate versions. Some of them are contentious — especially stricter provisions in the House against using taxpayer money to pay for abortion coverage and the House’s income tax increase for high-earning Americans.

Before the final Senate vote, Democrats must get past the last procedural hurdle Wednesday afternoon and put up 60 votes for the last time to cut off debate on the legislation. The 58 Senate Democrats and two independents have held together on two previous 60-vote tallies over the past

several days against united GOP opposition.

Democrats are also expected to turn back points of order raised against the bill by Republicans, including one questioning the constitutionality of requiring most every American to buy health insurance. Final passage on the legislation is set for 8 a.m. Thursday — Christmas Eve.

That’s 11 hours earlier than originally scheduled, thanks to a deal between Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky. Republicans had been threatening to use all the time available to them, which would have kept the Senate in session late into the night before Christmas. But bad weather is forecast for later in the week, senators and aides are eager to get home to their families, and the outcome is preordained after Reid struck the final deals over the weekend to get his caucus.

Republicans are keeping up their complaints about the special deals some Democratic senators got.

South Carolina Attorney General Henry McMaster, a candidate for governor, said he and his counterparts in Alabama, Colorado, Michigan, North Dakota, Texas and Washington state — all Republicans — are jointly taking a look at whether the special provisions for Nebraska and other states are constitutional. The federal government is picking up the full tab for an expansion of Medicaid in Nebraska, where conservative Sen. Ben Nelson provided Democrats their crucial 60th vote.

“These negotiations on their face appear to be a form of vote buying paid for by taxpayers,” McMaster said. □

*Good News*

Baptist Church

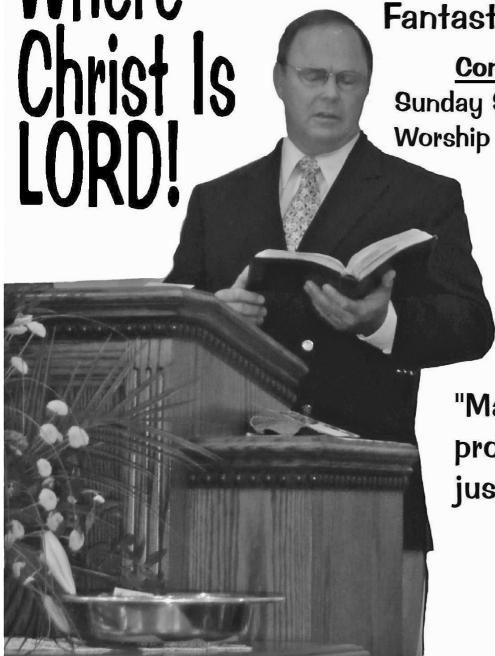
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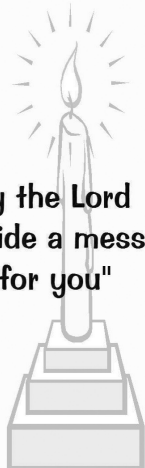
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### BALLOON BOY PARENTS Continued from Front Page

The Heenes' probation will be revoked if they are found to be profiting from any book, TV, movie or other deals related to the stunt.

"This, in simple terms, was an elaborate hoax that was devised by Mr. and Mrs. Heene," the judge said.

The Heenes pleaded guilty to charges that they carried out the balloon hoax, with deals that called for up to 90 days in jail for the husband and 60 days for his wife.

Schapanski ordered Mayumi Heene to serve 20 days in jail after her husband completes his sentence. Her time served is flexible — she can report to jail on 10 weekends, for example — so the children are cared for, the judge said.

Prosecutors asked for the maximum sentence for the husband, saying that a message needs to be sent to promoters who attempt to carry out hoaxes to generate publicity. Chief Deputy District Attorney Andrew Lewis also asked for full restitution to reimburse

authorities for the cost of investigating the hoax — an amount that could exceed \$50,000.

"People around the world were watching this unfold," he said. "Mr. Heene wasted a lot of manpower and a lot of money in wanting to get himself some publicity."

He added, "Jay Leno said it best when he said, 'This is copycat game.' And people will copycat this event. (The Heenes) need to go to jail so people don't do that."

He portrayed the Heenes as growing increasingly desperate as their pitches for a reality TV show kept getting turned down by networks — and the family fell deeper into a financial hole. Lewis said the Heenes set in motion the balloon hoax in early October as a way to jumpstart the effort and get some attention.

They chose Oct. 15 because the weather was cooperating and the kids were home for school with parent-teacher conferences, allowing the Heenes to report that 6-year-old Falcon had floated away,

Lewis said.

Once the parents were brought in for questioning, Richard Heene feigned sleep during the lie-detector test, claiming it was some sort of diabetic episode, Lewis said.

David Lane, Richard Heene's attorney, pleaded for leniency with the judge and said that the couple "have learned a lesson they will never forget for the rest of their lives." □

**Richard and Mayumi Heene leave court after sentencing on Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2009, in Fort Collins, Colo., in connection with the "Balloon Boy" hoax. Richard Heene was sentenced to 90 days jail time and Mayumi Heene to 20 days jail time. Both were given 4 years probation.**

Associated Press



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U.S. Representative Chris Smith (R-NJ) answers a phone call in Rio de Janeiro, Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2009.

Associated Press

## Court orders Brazilian family to relinquish boy

**BRADLEY BROOKS**

Associated Press Writer

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP) — A federal court has ordered a Brazilian family to turn over a 9-year-old boy to his U.S. father by Thursday morning.

The regional court in Rio de Janeiro issued a statement Wednesday afternoon announcing the order. The ruling gives the family until 9 a.m. Thursday to relinquish the boy to his father, David Goldman.

Goldman, of Tinton Falls, New Jersey, won a big legal victory late Tuesday when Brazil's chief justice upheld a lower court's ruling that ordered his son, Sean, returned to him. The boy has lived in Brazil since Goldman's ex-wife took him to her native country in 2004. Last year

she died in childbirth.

Goldman's lawyers were finalizing legal documents Wednesday morning and were fully expecting that the Brazilian family would turn over Sean as ordered, said U.S. Embassy spokeswoman Orna Blum, who is accompanying Goldman in Rio.

"We're hopeful that David and Sean will be reunited today," Blum said.

There has been no word from the Brazilian family or its lawyer, however, and it is not clear if the boy is even in Rio de Janeiro. Lawyers on both sides have said there was still a chance for the Brazilian family to appeal to Brazil's highest appeals court, though the chances of success seemed slight. The fact that the chief justice ruled Sean should be with his father

should take the steam out of any appeal from the Brazilian stepfather, himself a lawyer from a prominent family of Rio de Janeiro attorneys, U.S. Rep. Chris Smith, a Republican New Jersey congressman who traveled to Brazil to offer his support, told U.S. journalists in a teleconference late Tuesday.

Smith said law enforcement was on guard in case the Brazilian family did not transfer Sean. He said the international police agency Interpol had been notified to make sure Sean was not flown out of Brazil. "When? When? When will Sean and I be able to go home, father and son?" Goldman asked in an interview aired Wednesday morning on the U.S. television network NBC. □



THE CINEMAS



### SCHEDULE FOR WEEK OF DECEMBER 24 - DECEMBER 30

Dec 24 Closed • Dec 25 No Matinee

\*matinee: saturday & sunday | late show: friday and saturday

#### AT RENAISSANCE - ORANJESTAD

PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"	NEW
daily:	5.00	7.00
matinee:	12.30	2.45
G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG	
daily:	4.45	
matinee:	12.15	2.30
R	THE BLIND SIDE	
daily:	5.45	8.30
matinee:	12.00	2.45
	late show:	11.30
R	NINJA ASSASSIN	
daily:	7.00	9.15
late show:	11.45	
PG	OLD DOGS	
daily:	4.15	6.15
matinee:	12.15	2.15
	late show:	10.15
	late show:	12.15
PG-13	2012	
daily:	4.45	8.00
matinee:	1.30	late show: 11.15
PG	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	
daily:	9.00	
late show:	11.45	
PG-13	AVATAR 3D	
daily:	4.30	7.45
matinee:	1.15	late show: 11.00

#### AT PASEO HERENCIA

PG	ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS "THE SQUEAKQUEL"	NEW
daily:	4.45	7.00
matinee:	12.15	2.30
	late show:	
PG-13	TERUG NAAR DE KUST	NEW
daily:	6.45	9.15
late show:	11.45	
PG	THE TWILIGHT SAGA: NEW MOON	
daily:	9.00	
late show:	11.45	
G	THE PRINCESS AND THE FROG	
daily:	4.30	
matinee:	12.00	2.15
	late show:	
PG-13	2012	
daily:	5.00	8.15
matinee:	1.45	late show: 11.30
PG-13	DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THE MORGANS	
daily:	5.00	7.30
matinee:	12.30	2.45
	late show:	9.45
	late show:	12.00
PG-13	AVATAR 3D	
daily:	4.45	8.00
matinee:	1.30	late show: 11.15
R	ARMORED	
daily:	5.30	7.45
matinee:	1.00	3.15
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# Bombs target Iraqi Christians, Shiite Muslims

CHELSEA J. CARTER  
Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD (AP) — Bombs targeted Iraqi Christians and Shiite Muslims Wednesday, killing at least eight people and wounding four dozen before coinciding religious observances that will take place under heavy guard.

Insurgents have routinely targeted Shiites and Christians in an attempt to undermine the country's security gains and its Shiite-dominated government. Security forces in recent days have been concerned that the Shiite holy observances known as Ashoura and Christmas gatherings would be targeted by large-scale attacks. Ashoura marks the seventh-century death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson Hussein.

In the first of Wednesday's attacks, a bomb targeted a historic church in the northern city of Mosul a day before Christmas Eve services, killing two people and wounding five.

"Instead of performing Christmas Mass in this church, we will be busy removing rubble and debris," Hazim Ragheed, a priest at the church, said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press.

The bomb was hidden under sacks of baking flour in a handcart left 15 yards (meters) from the Mar Toma Church, or the Church of St. Thomas, a police officer said.

The officer said the two men killed were Muslims and that five other people were injured. A hospital official confirmed the casualties.

The officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to release the information to news media.

The blast damaged the wooden doors, windows, some furniture and one of the walls of the church, which is more than 1,200 years old, Ragheed said. Services will be moved out of the church,

but Ragheed did not say where they would be held.

"We demand that the government put an end to these repeated attacks," Ragheed said.

The blast occurred in an area where streets have been closed to cars and trucks to protect Mosul's dwindling Christian population.

Iraqi defense officials warned earlier in the week that intelligence reports pointed to attacks during Christmas, leading the government to step up security near churches and Christian neighborhoods.

Most of the increased security will be in Baghdad, Mosul and Kirkuk, said Defense Ministry spokesman Maj. Gen. Mohammed al-Askari. Christians have frequently been targeted since turmoil swept the country after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion, although the attacks have ebbed with an overall drop in violence. Still, tens of thousands of Christians have fled; many who stayed were isolated in neighborhoods protected by barricades and checkpoints.

A coordinated bombing campaign in 2004 targeted churches in the Iraqi capital and anti-Christian violence also flared in September 2007 after Pope Benedict XVI made comments perceived to be against Islam.

Churches, priests and businesses have been attacked by militants who denounce Christians as pro-American "crusaders." Paulos Rahho, the Chaldean Catholic archbishop of Mosul, was shot dead in March 2008 after being abducted by gunmen.

Later Wednesday, a blast struck a group of Shiite pilgrims preparing for Ashoura in Baghdad. The bomb, hidden in a bag, killed four pilgrims and wounded 31 others in eastern Baghdad, a police officer said. Among the wounded were women and children, he said, speaking on condition of anonymity because he is not

permitted to give information to reporters.

A second blast struck Shiite worshippers gathering in central Baghdad. The bomb, hidden behind a tent erected to provide food and water to pilgrims, killed one pilgrim and wounded four others, said another police official.

A third blast in western Baghdad killed one pilgrim and wounded eight others who had gathered to prepare for Ashoura rituals, police said.

Insurgents have routinely targeted pilgrims on their way to the southern holy city of Karbala during Ashoura. More than 25,000 Iraqi



Shiite Muslim men flagellate themselves with ceremonial chains to mark Ashoura in the holy city of Karbala, 80 kilometers (50 miles) south of Baghdad, Iraq, Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2009. The festival of Ashoura commemorates the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, the grandson of Muhammad at the Battle of Karbala, Iraq, in the year A.D. 680.

Associated Press

police and soldiers have been assigned to protect pilgrims, said Karbala police spokesman Capt. Alaa Abbas Jaafar.

At least 10 people died

in other attacks in Iraq, including four Iraqi police officers killed by gunmen who stormed a checkpoint in Abu Ghraib, west of Baghdad, police said. □

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Baby spinach leaves with toasted pecan nuts, cherry tomatoes, warm Brie bruschetta, honey balsamic vinaigrette \$ 12  
Signature soup: Creamy crab & corn soup, oven toasted bread bowl \$ 12  
Creamy lobster soup with shelled lobster, a dollop of dill crème fraiche \$ 9  
Pan seared, parsnip saffron puree, baby cress salad, basil jus \$ 16

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### Entrées

Grilled USDA New York Sirloin Steak, roasted shallots, haricots verts, whole grain mustard sauce \$ 36  
Beef tournedos, lobster tail, Dutch potatoes, pancetta, tomato chutney, tarragon hollandaise \$ 42  
Deer fillet on gingerbread, mustard, nuts & potato mash, onion confiture \$ 38  
Deep-fried crispy whole Red Snapper with Thai stir-fried vegetables, traditional Thai sweet-sour sauce \$ 34  
Kate wing, Caribbean fruit salsa, Dutch potatoes, smoked butter & white wine rosemary jus \$ 28  
Tiger Shrimp Tempura, coconut lemon grass sauce, Wakame salad, white rice \$ 34

### Dessert

Poached pear with bleu stilton cheese and chocolate with balsamic reduction \$ 12  
Warm Dutch apple pie, whipped cream, vanilla ice cream, vanilla sauce \$ 9  
Oven baked cheese cake, marinated forest fruits coulis, whipped cream \$ 9  
Vanilla lemon grass flan caramelized with cane sugar, Caribbean fruits \$ 9  
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# Plane overshoots Jamaica runway; more than 40 hurt



This video frame grab image from CVM Television shows the American Airlines flight 331 early Wednesday morning Dec. 23, 2009 after it overshot the runway Norman Manley International Airport in Kingston Jamaica and skidded to within 10 or 15 feet of the Caribbean Sea, injuring more than 40 people, according to officials. The plane's fuselage was cracked, both engines broke off from the impact, and the left main landing gear collapsed, airline spokesman Tim Smith said.

*Associated Press*

**KIRK WRIGHT**

**For The Associated Press**

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — An American Airlines flight carrying 154 people skidded across a Jamaican runway in heavy rain, bouncing across

the tarmac and injuring more than 40 people before it stopped just short of the Caribbean Sea, officials and witnesses said.

Panicked passengers screamed

and baggage burst from overhead bins as Flight 331 from Miami careened down the runway in the capital, Kingston, on Tuesday night, one passenger said.

The impact cracked the fuselage, crushed the left landing gear and separated both engines from the Boeing 737-800, airline spokesman Tim Smith said.

Crews evacuated dazed and bloodied passengers onto a beach from a cabin that smelled of smoke and jet fuel, passengers said. Rain poured through the plane's broken roof, one said.

Some 44 people were taken to hospitals with broken bones and back pains and four were seriously hurt, airport and Jamaican government officials said. American Airlines said two people were admitted to the hospital and nobody suffered life-threatening injuries.

Heavy turbulence on the way to Jamaica had forced the crew to halt the beverage service three times before giving up, Pilar Abaurrea of Keene, New Hampshire, told The Associated Press by phone. The pilot warned of more turbulence just before landing but said it likely wouldn't be much worse, she said.

"All of a sudden, when it hit the ground, the plane was kind of bouncing. Someone said the plane was skidding and there was panic," she said.

U.S. investigators will analyze whether the plane should have been landing in such bad weather, Smith said, adding that other planes had landed safely in the heavy rain.

Passenger Natalie Morales Hendricks told NBC's "Today" that the plane began to skid upon landing and "before I knew it, everything was black and we were crashing."

"Everybody's overhead baggage started to fall. Literally, it was like being in a car accident. People were screaming, I was screaming," she said.

"There was smoke and debris

everywhere," after the plane halted, she said. "It was a mess. Everybody could smell jet fuel."

Passenger Robert Mais told The Gleaner newspaper of Jamaica that he had heard the engine's reverse throttle but that the plane didn't seem to slow as it skittered down the runway.

The plane came to a halt about 10 to 15 feet (3 to 5 meters) from the Caribbean Sea and passengers walked along the beach to be picked up by a bus, Mais said. Rain came through the roof of the darkened jet and baggage from the overhead compartments was strewn about the cabin, he said.

The plane originated at Reagan National Airport in Washington and took off from Miami International Airport at 8:52 p.m. and arrived in Kingston at 10:22 p.m. It was carrying 148 passengers and a crew of six, American said. The majority of those aboard were Jamaicans coming home for Christmas, Jamaican Information Minister Daryl Vaz said.

Smith said there were two "significant" cracks in the fuselage, and the engines are designed to separate from the wings during an accident as a safety measure.

The airport reopened early Wednesday after officials had delayed flights because of concerns that the plane's tail might be hindering visibility.

Some 400 passengers waited for their flights to be cleared for takeoff, Security Minister Dwight Nelson told Radio Jamaica. Heavy rains that have pelted Jamaica's eastern region for four days are expected to dissipate by Thursday. Authorities said the rains washed away a 7-year-old girl on Tuesday and led to a bus accident in which two people died. □

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# Mexico says cartel killed marine hero's family

VILLAHERMOSA, Mexico (AP) — Family members of a fallen marine hailed as a drug-war hero were slain by a gang allied with a top drug lord in retaliation for the cartel leader's death, a state official said Wednesday.

Four people who are believed to be informants and aides for the Zeta gang were detained in the deaths of the mother, two siblings and aunt of Melquisedet Angulo, Tabasco state Attorney General Rafael Gonzalez said.

Angulo was the only marine who died in a Dec. 16 raid that killed drug lord Arturo Beltran Leyva.

The Zetas, former military elite-turned-hit men, have allied with the Beltran Leyva cartel in recent years.

The detained suspects — three men and one woman — either served as lookouts for the Zetas or transported money to pay the gunmen, who are still at large, Gonzalez said.

"The motive was an agreement this group made as a result of the events of Dec. 16," he told a news conference.

On Tuesday, a day after the navy honored Angulo as a national hero at his memorial service, gunmen burst into the family home in the Gulf coast state of Tabasco and shot to death four relatives. One sister survived but was seriously wounded.

President Felipe Calderon called the attack "a cowardly act" and vowed to press forward with his war on the cartels involving more than 45,000 Mexican troops.

Mexico's drug gangs frequently employ networks of lookouts and informants to perform logistics. Police have also been found to be on cartel payrolls, and Gonzalez later told local news media that some officers may have allowed — or helped — the assailants escape after Tuesday's attack.

Mexico's drug cartels sometimes stage retaliatory hits on military or law enforcement after the arrests or killings of top traffickers. In Tabasco, they had previously staged two such attacks on police officers and their families.

Assailants tossed hand

grenades at government offices in the northern state of Sonora late Tuesday. No one was injured, but state officials there said they are on alert for possible reprisals for Beltran Leyva's death.

Meanwhile, Mexico's National Human Rights Commission on Wednesday questioned the

policy of releasing the names of soldiers and police who have died fighting drug cartels. The government commission suggested officials respect their right to privacy.

The cartel's violent rage may have been further stoked this time by graphic photos published in local and

international news media of Beltran Leyva's bullet-riddled body. Leyva was killed in a shootout with marines last week in an apartment in Cuernavaca, south of Mexico City. Six of his bodyguards also died. The photos showed Beltran Leyva with his pants pulled down to his knees and

blood-soaked money laid over his corpse.

Four employees of the state medical examiner's office are under investigation for manipulating a crime scene, according to the attorney general's office in the central state of Morelos, where Beltran Leyva was killed. □

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# Steven Tyler in rehab for painkiller addiction



LOS ANGELES – Steven Tyler has entered a rehabilitation facility to treat an addiction to painkillers the Aerosmith frontman has taken to cope with 10 years of performance injuries. Tyler said he's eager to return to work with his band mates.

"I love Aerosmith; I love performing as the lead singer in Aerosmith. I am grateful for all of the support and love

In this Monday, Aug. 3, 2009 photo, Aerosmith lead singer Steven Tyler speaks at a news conference before the start of the Legends Ride, in Deadwood, S.D. Tyler says in a statement released Tuesday, Dec. .22, 2009, he has entered a rehab clinic to treat an addiction to pain killers he has taken to cope with 10 years of performance injuries.

(AP Photo/Steve McEnroe)

I am receiving and am committed to getting things taken care of," the 61-year-old rocker said in a statement released Tuesday.

The band canceled a summer tour in August after Tyler fell off the stage during a performance in South Dakota and broke his left shoulder.

Dr. Brian McKeon, who is treating Tyler, said in a statement that orthopedic injuries over the past decade have left the singer with severe chronic pain that will require surgeries on his knees

and feet.

Tyler checked into rehab last year to recover from several foot surgeries and physical therapy. Tyler said the procedures were to correct longtime foot injuries resulting from his physical performances with Aerosmith.

The singer for the blues-rock band was known for heavy drug and alcohol abuse in the 1970s and early 1980s, but completed rehabilitation in 1986, after which Aerosmith enjoyed a successful revival. □

## Amy Winehouse charged in alleged theater assault

LONDON – Police say singer Amy Winehouse has been charged in connection with an assault at a theater. Thames Valley Police said in a statement that the 26-year-old soul diva was arrested Wednesday after she presented herself at a police station with her lawyer. Police say Winehouse is free on bail and must appear in court on Jan. 20. Police say the singer was charged with a public order offense and common assault under the name Amy Civil, following a Saturday incident at Milton Keynes Theatre. Winehouse was granted a divorce from her husband, Blake Fielder-Civil, in July. Police did not provide details on the incident, but British media have reported that the singer allegedly struggled with a member of the theater's staff after heckling at a performance. □



FILE -- In this Feb. 20, 2008, file photo, Amy Winehouse performs at the Brit Awards 2008 in London. Winehouse, 26, has been charged by police in Milton Keynes, England, Wednesday Dec. 23, 2009, in connection with an assault at a theatre in the town on Dec.19. The singer was arrested after she attended Milton Keynes police station voluntarily with her legal adviser.

(AP Photo/Matt Dunham, file)





## BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

# Stocks give up early gains as new home sales drop



Traders work on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in this September 16, 2009 file photo.

By STEPHEN BERNARD,  
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — An unexpected drop in sales of new homes last month stalled a three-day rally on the stock market, leaving indexes narrowly mixed.

Stocks started out modestly higher early Wednesday after a report showing growth in consumer spending last month, but went into retreat at midmorning after the Commerce Department said sales of new homes plunged 11.3 percent in November to their lowest level since March.

The slump in new home sales was disappointing for two reasons — economists had forecast an increase, and the news came a day after stocks snapped higher on a separate report showing a better-than-expected gain in sales of existing homes last month.

“I’m surprised the market isn’t down more,” said Thomas Villalta, co-portfolio manager of the Jones Villalta Opportunity Fund. “I was thinking this would be a good excuse for a selloff.”

Positive signs of recovery in the beaten-down housing industry have been one of the most encouraging factors for investors in recent months,

REUTERS/Brendan McDermid and the market is quick to respond when the news turns bad.

Villalta said the weak home sales data fits into a pattern seen in recent months where one disappointing economic report comes out for every two or three upbeat readings.

Volume has been light during the holiday-shortened week, which can exaggerate moves in the market. The market is closed Friday for Christmas.

The weakness in housing followed news that personal spending and income both rose in November. However, economists say the growth remains too weak to sustain a strong economic recovery.

Earlier Wednesday the Commerce Department reported that personal income rose at the fastest rate in four months, allowing them to increase their spending for the second straight month. Personal incomes rose 0.4 percent, helped by higher wages, while spending rose 0.5 percent. Both figures fell slightly short of the expectations of analysts polled by Thomson Reuters.

The rise in wages reflects a decline in the unemployment rate last month to 10 percent. Treasury Secretary Timothy

Geithner said on ABC’s “Good Morning America” that it is reasonable to expect employers will start adding jobs by the spring.

In early afternoon trading, the Dow Jones industrial average fell 3.18, or less than 0.1 percent, to 10,461.75. The Standard & Poor’s 500 index rose 1.25, or 0.1 percent to 1,119.27, while the Nasdaq composite index rose 11.42, or 0.5 percent, to 2,264.09.

Advancing issues outnumbered decliners by about 2 to 1 on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 317.5 million shares, compared to 358.2 million traded at the same point Tuesday.

Stocks had rallied Tuesday after the National Association of Realtors said sales of existing homes grew more than expected last month. Sales of existing homes rose 7.4 percent in November, much stronger than the 2.5 percent increase that was expected.

Bond prices rose following three gains of declines. The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury note, which moves opposite its price, fell to 3.72 percent from 3.76 percent late Tuesday. The yield on the three-month T-bill, considered one of the safest investments, rose to 0.07 percent from 0.06 percent. The dollar mostly fell, while gold edged higher. The Russell 2000 index of smaller companies rose 2.46, or 0.4 percent, to 626.06.

Overseas, Britain’s FTSE 100 gained 0.8 percent, Germany’s DAX index gained 0.2 percent, and France’s CAC-40 rose 0.3 percent. The DAX and CAC-40 both hit highs for the year earlier in the day. Markets in Japan were closed for a holiday. □



FILE - In this file photo made Friday, Nov. 27, 2009, a customer pulls a cart filled with a flat screen television and other items during the traditional Black Friday shopping day at the Target store in Mayfield Heights, Ohio. Personal incomes rose in November at the fastest pace in six months, while spending posted a second straight increase.

(AP Photo/Amy Sancetta, file)

## Incomes, spending post gains; new-home sales sink

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER,

AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON — Personal incomes rose in November at the fastest pace in six months, while spending posted a second straight increase. But economists cautioned that the gains remain too weak to sustain a strong economic recovery.

The Commerce Department said Wednesday that personal incomes rose 0.4 percent in November, helped by a \$16.1 billion increase in wages and salaries. It reflected the drop in unemployment that occurred last month.

The rise in incomes helped bolster spending, which rose 0.5 percent in November. Still, both the income and spending gains were slightly less than economists had expected.

After taking inflation into account, after-tax incomes are rising at an annual rate of just 1.2 percent. Economists say the recovery will require higher levels of income and spending. This is especially true at a time when households are using some income to shrink debt loads and rebuild savings, rather than spend.

“Annualized income growth of a little over 1 percent will not be enough to drive a significant recovery in consumption at the same time that debt needs to be paid down,” said Paul Dales, U.S. economist at Capital Economics.

Contributing to the cautionary picture was a separate report Wednesday that sales of new homes plunged unexpectedly last month to the lowest level since April. November’s sales fell 11.3 percent. And sales were down 9 percent from a year ago. The median sales price of \$217,400 was down nearly 2 percent from \$221,600 a year earlier, though up about 4 percent from October’s level of \$209,400. □



# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY

### More undergrads than ever in NFL draft?

By BARRY WILNER

AP Football Writer

*Get ready for the undergraduates.*

The NFL's uncertain labor situation — with no salary cap in place for 2010, and a potential labor stoppage in 2011 — has many college players wondering what an uncapped year or a potential rookie wage scale could mean for them.

It also seems to have more juniors than ever thinking about whether to make an early move to the NFL.

"We're looking at that and we're talking to the right people about it. And we don't know, because they don't know," says Washington coach Steve Sarkisian, who went through the early-entry process with several Southern Cal stars before taking the Huskies job. He investigated the issue for his current quarterback, junior Jake Locker, who chose to stay in school despite the likelihood he'd be a high draft pick in April.

"That's the hard part. They've been talking about that thing for about five or six years now. That was one of the ploys to try to get (Matt) Leinart to come out early, that some of the agents were using. So that was how many years ago now, and they are still talking about it? So I don't know."

Nobody knows much of anything. An uncapped season next year, the first since 1993, will modify restrictions on free agency, but probably won't have much effect on rookies. But if there's no pro football in 2011, that would be devastating. The draft itself could disappear.

So, many player agents are projecting a record influx of eligible underclassmen into the 2010 draft. The most to enter early was 70 in 2008 and some agents believe close to 100 will declare in January. Those players have until Jan.



In this Dec. 7, 2009, file photo, Notre Dame Jimmy Clausen talks to wide receiver Golden Tate at a college football news conference in South Bend, Ind, where they announced they will bypass their senior seasons at Notre Dame and enter the NFL draft.

Associated Press

15 to decide, then have 72 hours to withdraw their names and retain college eligibility. The NFL has made it easier for those players — who must be three years removed from senior year in high school — to be informed of their prospects. In 1994, the league, at the behest of the American Football Coaches Association, created the College Advisory Committee. Personnel evaluations from NFL clubs and scouting groups provided the collegians with opinions on where they might go in the draft, using five categories: as high as the first round; as high as the second; potentially in the third; not in the first three rounds; not at all.

Last year, 151 players were evaluated and 46 entered the draft, with only five not being selected. Will the numbers jump this year, given the NFL labor landscape?

"I think that rumbling has been growing a little bit,"

Indianapolis Colts general manager Chris Polian says. "I think any time you are in a gray area, people can use that kind of lack of solid information or the lack of a solid plan to manipulate things to their benefit."

That unsureness plagues everyone, particularly players and agents.

"I know that the numbers are up even to this point," says agent Joe Linta, who represents, among others, Baltimore quarterback Joe Flacco and center Matt Birk. "I think it stems from the media, the possibility of a work stoppage and more players understanding that there is no evidence to support that they will be picked higher if they stay."

Adds Peter Schaffer, whose clients include Joe Thomas and Hakeem Nicks:

"Every year, historically, there are a lot more juniors that inquire than will come out, and

every year we say it will be a lot. This is unique due to the uncertainty of the (collective bargaining agreement) and what effects that is going to have on the rookie salaries moving forward.

"A lot of people talking to the juniors are saying you should come out, there will be some artificial constraint on the rookies. There are a lot of juniors potentially coming out who will never be a top-10 pick and agents are telling them, 'If you are a top-10 pick. ...' It's an issue. People will be using that to encourage juniors to come out and I don't think that is right. They must decide only on what is best for their family and career."

OK, so what is best?

The college players, who can't contact agents without losing their eligibility, often look to their coaches for advice. If a coach is honest, he'll temper his desire for a star to return for another season by offering a realistic evaluation of that player's pro prospects.

Georgia Tech coach Paul Johnson has two players, defensive end Derrick Morgan and running back Jonathan Dwyer, projected as top picks.

Johnson talked briefly with all his juniors who were contemplating entry into the draft. He also talked to personnel evaluators in the NFL about those players and came away believing only the really high selections would be affected by the labor situation.

"My big thing in talking to them was to sit down and try to give them a plan. Here's an outline. Here's a plan. Here's what needs to happen," Johnson says. "Have a plan of what you want to do and don't get talked into something."

Minnesota coach Tim Brewster thinks more players are seriously considering turning pro than ever due to the labor uncertainty. □



San Jose Sharks goalie Evgeni Nabokov, left, of Kazakhstan, celebrates with Manny Malhotra after an NHL hockey game against the Chicago Blackhawks on Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2009 in Chicago. San Jose won 3-2.

Associated Press

#### NHL Roundup

### Sharks edge Blackhawks to top West

CHICAGO (AP) — The San Jose Sharks edged their closest rivals Chicago 3-2 on Tuesday to take a lead over the Blackhawks atop the NHL's Western Conference.

Evgeni Nabokov made 45 saves, Joe Thornton and Dany Heatley each had a goal and an assist, and Jason Demers also scored for San Jose, who notched a third straight win and inflicted Chicago's first home loss in six games.

Patrick Kane and Marian Hossa each had a goal and an assist for the Blackhawks, who lost despite outshooting the Sharks 47-14.

Canucks 4, Predators 1

In Vancouver, British Columbia, Vancouver moved into a provisional playoff position with victory over Nashville.

Daniel and Henrik Sedin each had a goal and two assists, and Roberto Luongo made 20 saves, as the Canucks moved up to eighth in the Western Conference. Steve Bernier and Sami Salo also scored for the home team. □



# BYU beats Oregon State in Las Vegas Bowl

OSKAR GARCIA

Associated Press Writer

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Quarterback Max Hall threw for 192 yards and three touchdowns, leading Brigham Young University to a 44-20 win over Oregon State in college football's Las Vegas Bowl on Tuesday.

Hall gave the Cougars their third win in five straight bowl appearances in the Sin City and ended the Beavers' run of five consecutive bowl wins. Hall threw a 25-yard touchdown pass to Luke Ashworth, a 17-yard scoring strike to Dennis Pitta and a 15-yard TD pass to Manase Tonga. He had 139 yards passing in the first half.

Tonga added an 18-yard rushing touchdown, and Harvey Unga finished with 76 yards rushing and a TD for BYU.

Oregon State scored on 1-yard runs by quarterback Sean Canfield and Jacquizz Rodgers, and a 31-yard

pass to Damola Adeniji after the game was out of reach. Adeniji led all receivers with seven receptions for 102 yards.

Canfield completed only four passes in the first half as the Beavers struggled to sustain drives. He finished 20 for 41 for 173 yards and an interception.

Winds gusted to 80 kph (50 mph) at Sam Boyd Stadium and temperatures fell below zero degrees (30 F). The gusts were so strong that one of Oregon State's punts traveled untouched only 6 yards.

Oregon State struck first on Canfield's touchdown. The score was set up by consecutive big plays from the Rodgers brothers — an 18-yard rush by Jacquizz on the first play of the drive and a 17-yard run by James.

BYU responded with a touchdown on its next possession, marching 84 yards on 14 plays in just under six



BYU's Matt Bauman (35) reacts to a defensive stop against Oregon State early in the third quarter of the Las Vegas Bowl NCAA college football game in Las Vegas, Tuesday Dec. 22, 2009. BYU 44-20.

Associated Press

minutes and scoring on Unga's 1-yard run.

The normally dependable Rodgers fumbled for the first time in his college career in the first quarter, and Matt Bauman returned it 34 yards for a BYU score.

Oregon State then looked as if it

would bounce back from that fumble when it seemingly recovered a muffed punt near the goal line. But a holding call forced Oregon State to punt it again, and BYU drove 69 yards and kicked a 28-yard field goal. □

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*NBA Roundup*

# Blazers finish hard to beat Mavericks 85-81



Portland Trail Blazers center Joel Przybilla (10) grabs his knee as he rolls on the ground after coming down on it in the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Dallas Mavericks, Tuesday, Dec. 22, 2009, in Dallas. Przybilla left the game and did not return.

*Associated Press*

DALLAS(AP)—The Portland Trail Blazers finished over the top of the Dallas Mavericks to win 85-81 in Tuesday's clash of two of the top teams in the NBA's Western Conference.

Brandon Roy scored 23 points and LaMarcus Aldridge added 19 points and 12 rebounds for Portland.

Dallas held a six-point lead early in the fourth but Portland came back with a 17-3 run that began and ended with 3-pointers from Steve Blake, taking an eight-point advantage with 3:48 left.

Dirk Nowitzki's 3-pointer with 1:16 to go pulled Dallas within two points and the Mavericks had a shot to tie it, but Nowitzki's 17-footer rimmed out with 40 seconds to play.

Andre Miller's two free throws with 6.5 seconds remaining sealed the Blazers' victory. Nowitzki had 27 points and nine rebounds in his return from an elbow injury and J.J. Barea added 22 points for the Mavericks, who had won six of seven.

In Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant

scored 40 points for the sixth time this season as Los Angeles narrowly held off Oklahoma City.

Pau Gasol had 15 points and 11 rebounds for the Lakers, who had a poor first half and needed two last-minute free throws to win their first game back from a five-game road trip.

After trailing by 12 in the first half, Los Angeles blew most of an 11-point lead in the fourth quarter. The Lakers' lead was twice cut to one point in the final 25 seconds, but they held on. Oklahoma City's Kevin Durant scored 30 points before fouling out with 1:31 to play, as the Thunder lost their fifth in six games.

In Boston, the hosts came from a 12-point third-quarter deficit to run down Indiana, boosting their lead in the NBA's Eastern Conference.

Paul Pierce missed his first 10

shots but then scored 16 points in the fourth quarter, including seven straight, to put Boston ahead for good.

Pierce finished with 21 points, going 12 for 13 from the free throw line to make up for his slow start from the floor. Kendrick Perkins scored 19 points to go with eight rebounds.

Indiana's Troy Murphy had 24 points and a season-high 18 rebounds but the Pacers gave up a 15-point halftime lead to fall to a fourth straight loss.

**In other NBA games it was, Charlotte 88, Detroit 76; Washington 105, Philadelphia 98; New York 88, Chicago 81; Boston 103, Indiana 94; Memphis 121, Golden State 108; Atlanta 112, Minnesota 87; Portland 85, Dallas 81; Houston 108, L.A. Clippers 99; and L.A. Lakers 111, Oklahoma City 108.** □

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# Michael Schumacher to return to F1 with Mercedes

GEIR MOULSON

Associated Press Writer

BERLIN (AP) — Seven-time Formula One champion Michael Schumacher is coming out of retirement to drive for Mercedes in 2010, saying Wednesday that he expects to contend for the title again. The German, who turns 41 on Jan. 3, announced his comeback after three years away from the sport that he dominated for the first half of the decade — putting an end to weeks of speculation.

“Three years of absence gave back all the energy that I’m feeling right now,” Schumacher said in a telephone conference. “I feel ready for some serious stuff.”

“I still feel absolutely on the edge. It’s thrilling and exciting,” he said. “I believe I can be absolutely competitive.”

Schumacher, who will partner Nico Rosberg in an all-German team for the 2010 season, said he and Mercedes are in discussions about a deal through the 2012 season.

“We are talking about a three-year deal. It’s not a one-off thing,” Schumacher said. “We are looking for some continuation.”

Financial terms were not disclosed, but Germany’s Bild daily — which first broke news of the deal — reported that Schumacher would earn €7 million (\$10 million) under an initial one-year contract. Schumacher competed in 249 F1 races from 1991-2006 with Jordan, Benetton and Ferrari. He won the F1 driver’s championship in 1994 and 1995 and five straight years from 2000-2004. He set records with 91 race wins and several other milestones in the sport which still stand.

“Our aim can only be to fight for the championship,” Schumacher said.

“What do you expect? I have won it (the title) seven times; I’m now with the team that won both titles last year, we have on top Mercedes as a partner and team owner,” he told the British Broadcasting

Corp. “So you cannot expect anything else than to go for the world championship, and that’s what we’re aiming for.” Schumacher had planned a short-term comeback with Ferrari last season to fill in for the injured Felipe Massa, but he had to call that off due to a neck injury from a motorcycle accident. “I made sure myself, and 100 percent with the neck there are no more issues,” he said. “There has been enough time now for it to heal completely.”

Schumacher had been working as a consultant with Ferrari since his retirement, attending some F1 races. He said he had not envisioned a permanent comeback until approached by Mercedes team principal Ross Brawn — the man who oversaw the German’s seven world titles: five with Ferrari and two with Benetton.

Brawn said he was convinced that Schumacher would be competitive.

“He’s the best judge of what he can do and I trust him implicitly, and he told me he can do it so I’m very confident,” Brawn said. “He’s always been his own best critic.”

Mercedes took over the Brawn GP team that won the drivers’ and constructors’ championships in its first season in 2009. Jenson Button, who won the drivers’ title with Brawn, has since left for McLaren while Rubens Barrichello has gone to Williams.

Schumacher’s return gives him a chance to pay back Mercedes, which steered his pre-F1 career.

“The one reason I seriously thought about my return is because an old friend asked me,” Schumacher said. “Mercedes gave me a chance to enter Formula One and throughout the years we were never able to work together, but now I have that chance. I am happy to give back for what Mercedes gave me in the early days.”

“I was not thinking I would have an offer,” Schumacher said.

“I could not have imagined I would have returned. Due to this special combination, that no one could have planned in advance, I just thought, ‘Why not?’”

Schumacher acknowledged that parting company with Ferrari was “certainly not an easy step.”

He said he still feels “strong solidarity and loyalty to these guys who have accompanied me and have always built great cars for me.” □



The Dec. 22, 2009 picture released by Brawn GP on Wednesday, Dec. 23, 2009 shows German F1 driver Michael Schumacher in the headquarters of British Brawn GP in Brackley, England. Michael Schumacher’s bid for an eighth world title provides Formula One with one of the most eagerly anticipated championship seasons in history. Schumacher, who turns 41 in January, announced Wednesday he is returning to the sport after three years in retirement to drive for the Mercedes team in 2010.

Associated Press



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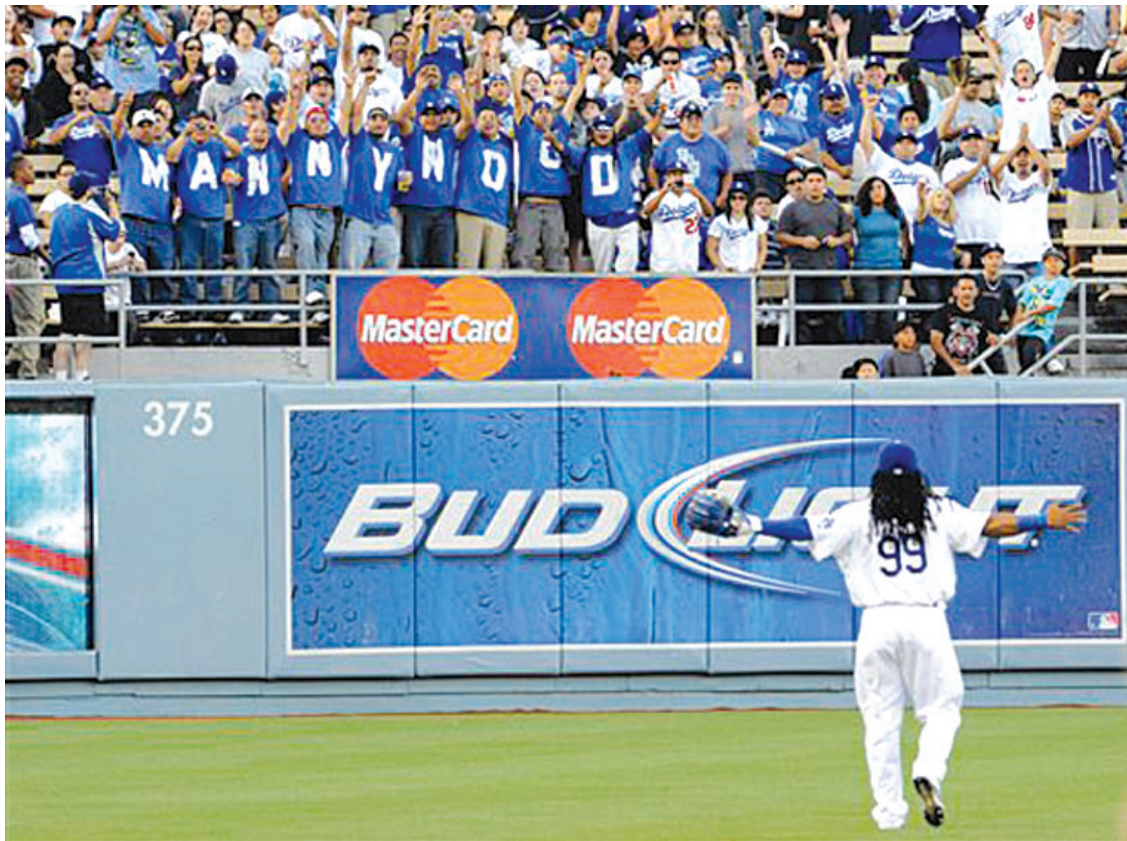
# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY

### Steroids' shadow is AP Sports Story of the Year

By **NANCY ARMOUR**  
AP National Writer

The dark shadow that performance-enhancing drugs continue to cast on baseball was picked as the sports Story of the Year by members of The Associated Press. Some of the biggest names in the game — Alex Rodriguez, Manny Ramirez and David “Big Papi” Ortiz — were linked to performance-enhancing drugs this year, and the story received 800 points in voting by editors at U.S. newspapers that are members of the AP. The balloting was unusual in that a major story — Tiger Woods’ accident on Nov. 27 and the sex scandal that followed — happened after voting had started. By then, 37 of 161 ballots had been submitted. Given the extraordinary nature of the Woods story, the AP added it to the top stories ballot Nov. 30 and gave editors who had voted prior to that the chance to submit a new ballot, which about 10 did. In the end, the Woods’ scandal received 41 first-place votes, compared with 27 for the steroids crisis.



Los Angeles Dodgers’ Manny Ramirez takes the field in the first inning of a baseball game against the Houston Astros, in this July 16, 2009 file photo, in Los Angeles.

Nonetheless, baseball’s drug woes was still rated a bigger story overall by editors than the Woods’ scandal. Even if only the votes cast after the Woods’ scandal broke were counted, editors still picked the steroid scourge as the

year’s top story.

“The impact that that story had made it the story of the year,” said Lance Hanlin, sports editor of the Beaufort (S.C.) Gazette and The (Hilton Head) Island Packet. “It was a big, ongoing, overall story.”

Though only one MLB player tested positive for a performance-enhancing drug in this, the first full year of a toughened program, steroids continued to taint America’s pastime. Spring training began with A-Rod, the highest-paid

player in the game and one of the New York Yankees biggest stars, admitting that he used banned substances from 2001-03 while playing for the Texas Rangers. Almost three months later, Ramirez was suspended for 50 games after baseball obtained records that showed he used a banned female fertility drug.

The summer brought reports that Ortiz and Sammy Sosa were on the infamous “list,” the 104 players who tested positive in baseball’s anonymous 2003 survey. Ortiz insisted he’d never knowingly used performance-enhancing drugs, and there’s no way to know whether he actually tested positive or, if he did test positive, whether it was for steroids or a substance contained in a supplement.

Miguel Tejada was sentenced to a year of probation after pleading guilty in federal court to misleading Congress about the use of performance-enhancing drugs. And Barry Bonds and Roger Clemens are still in limbo, their legal cases related to drugs working their way through the system. □

*Associated Press*



This is a May 11, 2007, file photo showing San Diego Padres manager Bud Black, right, gesturing to umpire Mike Winter while wearing the team’s 1972 uniform, on retro night at PETCO Park in San Diego. The Padres are breaking out their retro mustard-and-mud look for their home Thursday afternoon games next season. Team president Tom Garfinkel says the Padres will wear replica uniforms from 1978 for their six scheduled Thursday afternoon games at Petco Park.

*Associated Press*

### MLB, umps reach 5-year deal

By **RONALD BLUM**  
AP Sports Writer

NEW YORK — Major League Baseball and its umpires have reached an agreement on a five-year labor contract running through December 2014.

The sides worked into Tuesday evening to reach the deal and announced it Wednesday morning. Owners and the World Umpires Association hope to ratify the agreement next month. Owners meet Jan. 14 in Scottsdale, Ariz., and the umpires hold their annual gathering a few days later.

Management has been seeking to gain increased flexibility on postseason assignments as part of the agreement, which could allow umpires to

work the World Series in consecutive seasons. Following a series of missed calls during the playoffs, MLB went with an all veteran crew of six umpires in this year’s World Series.

This marks the second straight agreement between the sides reached without acrimony. In September 1999, 22 umpires lost their jobs as part of a failed mass resignation ahead of bargaining. Half of them were eventually rehired.

Joe West, rehired in 2002, replaced John Hirschbeck as WUA president in February. The WUA took over as the bargaining representative before the 2000 season, replacing Richie Phillips’ Major League Umpires Association, which was headed by Jerry Crawford. □





## Glittering holiday gala for The Westin Resort associates



PALM BEACH - This past Thursday evening, the associates and management of The Westin Resort, Aruba held their annual holiday dinner gala. The year-end gala is always a grand affair to remember for the resort staff, and this year was no exception.

Pages B8 & 9

## Tony Award winning Kiril Kulish on island to star in The Nutcracker



ORANJESTAD - Wednesday, December 23, Aruban media had the pleasure of meeting Kiril Kulish, one of the three young men to make Broadway history by winning the Tony Award for Best Performer in a Broadway Musical for their starring roles in "Billy Elliot-The Musical." The show also garnered a Tony for Elton John, for Best Musical.

Page C1

## Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino 2009 Awards Celebration

## Rudolfo Farro chosen as Marriott's Associate of the Year

ORANJESTAD - The Aruba Marriott Resort & Stellaris Casino recently held an Awards Reception complete with entertainment and plenty of food and beverage. The managers and supervisors of the 4th quarter were recognized during the event and also the All Star Team of 2009, Associate of the Year 2009, Supervisor of the Year 2009 and Managers of the year were recognized for their achievements. After all the awards, associates danced the night away to the band's music. The event started with the recognition of the Supervisors of the 4th quarter. The following associates were nominated for their hard



work and dedication during the 4th quarter: Francis Croes (AYS), Gislaine Croes (Activities), Gerald Sarmiento (F&B MVCI), Eunice Guzman (Housekeeping Ocean Club), Andre le Grand (Loss Prevention MVCI), Leonard Geerman (Compliance), Sashara Carty (Front Office Resort), Shirley Dielingen (Housekeeping Resort), Kenneth de Vreede (Engineering Ocean Club).

The recipient of the Supervisor of the 4th Quarter was Marta Cano from the Kitchen. Marta has been recognized due to her hard work and leadership in the kitchen, but above all, for her love and dedication and the relationships that she builds with those who report to her.

Followed we celebrated the Manager of the 4th Quarter. Nominees were: Jeslin Gomez - Wever (Human Resources), Daniel Aguirre (Engineering Ocean Club), Roxanna Yrausquin (Housekeeping Surf), Eveline Peels (La Vista), Danny Peterson (Casino Slots), Christie Roelofsen (Ruth's Chris).

Continued on Page B4



# Catch your own dinner with Driftwood!

## Motto at Driftwood Restaurant: "From the pier to your plate!"

**ORANJESTAD** - The downtown marina is home of **Driftwood Fishing Charters**, the successful fishermen of the established seafood restaurant **Driftwood** in Oranjestad.

Driftwood owner Herby Merryweather has a love and passion for fishing. A fisherman who knows about fish, what our local waters have to offer, and what the words



"fresh seafood" really mean. What Herby catches will be served in his restaurant on

the same day. Herby loves to share his fishing passion with the many visitors to the island. His fleet of a 35 ft. Twin Engine Bertram yacht and a 50 ft. Twin Engine Post yacht, appropriately called "Driftwood I and II, is available for charters on a daily basis from 8am to

### Catch your own dinner

12 noon and from 1pm to 5pm. A charter includes: captain, mate, all fishing equipment, bait, sodas and bottled water. On a full day charter sandwiches and snacks are also included. You can call Herby directly at (297) 592 4040 or go to [www.driftwoodaruba.com](http://www.driftwoodaruba.com).

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Rates per boat

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### Driftwood Restaurant

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menu has been jubled by many. Driftwood offers daily specials, as well as a delicious 3-course menu for just \$24.

## Driftwood Restaurant

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[www.driftwoodaruba.com](http://www.driftwoodaruba.com)

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'All I want for Christmas is You!'

# Who would not want these cute puppies



**ORANJESTAD** - Who would not melt when looking at the pictures of these cute puppies. Just twelve weeks old, they are waiting to be adopted. Their mom, Mocca, is at the shelter for reasons you do not want to know in these happy days of giving.

The three cuties are playful and love attention. They make the best gift for underneath the tree, but remember: dogs cost money, not only

to feed, but to care for. And they do not stay small - they grow up. So please realize, when thinking of adopting a pup, that you will have a companion that will rely on you, care for you, protect you and love you endlessly for about 12 years if you treat him or her the way that you yourself would like to be treated.

Please call Andreina at 5925130 to adopt an adorable pup. Merry Christmas! ☐





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# Rudolfo Farro chosen as Marriott's Associate of the Year



## Continued from Page B1

The recipient of the Manager of the 4th Quarter was Shuraima Henriquez (Activities MVCI). Shuraima was a driving force behind a series of events to help raise community awareness in regards to Breast Cancer. She and her team worked hard on raising money and managed to surpass their own expectation.

Kevin Schwab, the resort complex Vice President & General Manager and Director of Human Resources, Barbara Bressat - Bronswinkel, announced the All Star Team of the Year and Associate of the Year 2009. Each month the resort recognizes seven hourly associates as the 'Employees of the Month'. Winners from each month's All Star Team then become nominees for the All Star Team of the Year and ultimately the resort's Associate of the Year. The All Star Team of the Year for 2008 includes: Evon Maxwell (Activities - MVCI), Cesar Salazar (Kitchen), Miguel Aponte (Casino Pit), Ratna Soekrasno (Accounting Payroll), Jeremy Servanie (Engineering Grounds), and Fredenesvinda de Leon (Housekeeping Ocean Club) Each All Star Team winner received congratulatory letters and plaques as well as \$300 and dinner for two in one of Marriott's restaurants.

The reception eclipsed with the announcement of the Associate of the Year 2009 who turned out to be Rudolfo Farro from the Banquet department. Since joining the company in 2005, Rudolfo is frequently recognized as an outstanding Banquet Houseperson. You will detect his warm smile from far away. Duffy joined to company as a part time associate but spends many of his hours ensuring that each and every guest who has an event at our property leaves happy. He will go above and beyond to make things happen, and always with that smile. Duffy continues to exceed expectations and sees each and every opportunity or encounter with a guest or owner



as a way to positively impact the guest's expectations and to make it a truly memorable one. Steven Marra, Director of Food & Beverage announced the recipient of the Supervisor of the Year 2009. Marta Cano who was also recognized for Supervisor of the 4th Quarter was filled with emotions as she was called on stage. She joined Marriott in May of 1995 when the resort opened. During these 14 years, Martha has managed to work her way up from a cook helper to a supervisor. She goes above and beyond to have her area run smoothly. Her love and dedication for her job is apparent every single day when she comes to work. Steven Marra also had the honor to recognize one of the managers in the Food & Beverage Discipline as the Manager of the Year 2009. James Rogan, Executive Sous Chef, has been working for Marriott since 1986 when he opened Marriott's San

Diego property. He transferred to Aruba a little over a year ago from Frenchman's Reef, St. Thomas. Chef has worked hard on making positive changes in the kitchen, from menus to brand standards. The love that he has for his job is a driving force behind the great changes in the kitchen. Up next we had another Manager of the Year 2009. Peter Keijzer, General Manager of the Casino had many positive comments to say about Raquel Vrolijk, Production Manager of the Casino. Raquel started her career with Marriott Aruba in 1998. At the beginning of this year she assumed a new position of Production Manager of the Casino. She has been able to make a very positive impact in the organization of the pit operation. She has made an impact in passing audits, reducing vacation days, managing associates on sick leave and assuring that the pit is always staffed accordingly. The Associate of the Year, Supervisor of the Year and Managers of the year, received a congratulatory letter from the Vice President & General Manager as well as a plaque, \$500,- in cash, a round trip ticket to the continental US or Caribbean, and a complimentary 5 night stay at any Marriott property.

The General Manager and Vice President, Kevin Schwab, together with the entire executive team would like to congratulate all nominees and winners. □



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A record number of participating teams

# 'Best-ever' Beach Tennis Ranking Tournament held at Eagle Beach

EAGLE BEACH - The words 'best-ever' and 'hopi leuk mes' were heard during the final Beach Ranking Tournament of the year, which took place last Sunday at Eagle Beach. A fantastic tent, bleachers, lots to eat and drink and a record number of 92 participating teams who played their hearts out made this day unforgettable. Even the shower was a hit!

As Beach Tennis is conquering Aruba fast, the number of players is growing accordingly, but also the level of play is increasing. That is especially noticeable in the Pro Division, where the Men and Women are hitting the soft ball hard and furiously over the net. The Pro Men final, played with lights, was superb and some 60 Beach Tennis fanatics stayed till long after sunset to witness the sizzling final between Gijs de Rooij and Dennis Schoneveld and Jochem Ros with Aksel Imac. Jochem and Aksel won in two sets (6-4/7-5). Pabien!

Other results are:

Ladies fun:

1 Sascha Nieuwenhuis/Marije Kat - 2 Mirjam Jongbloets/Mite vd Burg

**Fun men:**

1 Arjen Hoogendam /Jurgen vd Meer - 2 Marin Bijl/Wim Eelens

**Fun mix:**

1 Abi/Bryan -2 Monique in 't Veld /Timothy in 't Veld

**Intermediate men:**

1 Eric van Toorn/Siardus Witteveen - 2 Jeroen Recourt/Joost van Voorthuizen

**Advanced ladies:**

1 Wikke Bollen/Heleen Bongers - 2 Henriette Snauw/Carola vd Meer

**Advanced men:**

1 Wim Duijzer/Patrick Boset - 2 John Douglas/Ryan Ollock

**Advanced mix:**

1 Cora -/Julio van Leeuwen - 2 Bryan Helmeyer/Kamilah Dammers

**Pro ladies:**

1 Zoe Krohn/Stephanie Marchena - 2 Tina Escebedo/Jolanda Overbeek

**Pro men:**

1 Jochem Ros/Aksel Imac - 2 Gijs de Rooij/Dennis Schoneveld



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## \*\*\*HUMAN HINTS\*\*\*

*The Overwhelming Heat of Emotion*

We each hold a balance between Logic and Emotion, which we must maintain every moment of our lives. Even when pushed to either extreme, we remain aware of the boundaries that hold together our civilized social structure. Considering the forces people are under, it is an amazing Blessing that we don't lose it more often. If we did, we'd sacrifice our social freedom, of which we have plenty.

In the three dimensional life, it is so easy to succumb to extreme emotion...and it feels so good to release your control. Our emotions can be aroused suddenly and unexpectedly, during the course of our daily lives. We become numb to what is brewing inside of us until an external trigger forces us to release it without control, usually in a

way that hurts us the most.

When Emotion overwhelms us, it is often impossible to escape. In those moments, we must revert to Survival Mode. Remember that the most basic, most important thing you can do when you're angry is to remove yourself from the situation before you act or speak. Just leave before you lash out and hurt yourself. Once you're separate from the situation, you can release your anger in a controlled way that won't hurt anyone. When the excess emotion is released, you can regain your Logic. Let yourself see the logic of the matter, no matter how strong your ego fights. Do not let your inner-child block your growth. Only after you release your emotions and see things logically, should you make decisions or take action. Weigh all

consequences heavily before acting.

When you're emotionally involved, it's almost impossible to see a situation from a logical point of view. It takes maturity and inner conviction to overcome your inner child, but we can't move into the fourth dimension if we remain as three dimensional children. In the mean time, we must learn to not act or speak while intense emotion holds us in its grip. In the Heat of Emotion, you will logically know what you should do. You might, however, remain powerless, unable to change in the face of all logic. Remember your basic survival skills. Do not act or react based on your emotion. Leave the situation before you lash out and hurt yourself. Then let the emotion subside, and force yourself

to see things logically. Then reassess the situation. Make decisions and take action based on a logical analysis.

Emotion heals us and guides us in ways that we cannot possibly imagine, and we should not condemn what we feel. It is important to embrace the emotion, come through it and emerge on the other side of it. If we suppress our emotions, they will build until we explode. If we are too afraid to face our inner emotional demons, we will never gain courage, and we might never grow.

Until Tomorrow...

Go to [www.HumanHints.com](http://www.HumanHints.com) to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~**Quentin Danziger**

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what

we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought. HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought. HumanHints.com, PO Box 997, Vail, CO 81658 Copyright HumanHints. All Rights Reserved. □

**post aruba**

### ANNOUNCEMENT

Post Aruba N.V. would like to inform all its clients that:

On December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009:

- The post offices in Oranjestad, Santa Cruz, San Nicolas and E-Post at Aerocargo will be open from 7:30a.m. until 12p.m.
- The post offices in Port of Call and Palm Beach Plaza Mall will be open from 8a.m. until 2p.m.

On December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009 all our offices will operate with its normal business hours.

Management and staff would like to wish you a Merry Christmas.

Sincerely,  
 Management

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## Celebrate Christmas with Live Music & Entertainment at Casa Tua Barcelona



ORANJESTAD - Our Flamenco Show will be extended this Christmas with the performance of Kavey Yarzagaray. This Flamenco guitar player will perform together with Angela Croes tomorrow night (Friday) and then again next Wednesday.

Enjoy your Paella and Sangria together with this fantastic live show! The downtown atmosphere is cool and relaxed with its in- and outside seating.

The highlight at Casa Tua Barcelona is also the new lunch specials every weekday from Monday till Friday! **A \$9.95 lunch special; Beef tenderloin with a red wine sauce or choose the Grouper Fillet for \$11.95. Both dishes include a soft drink. Fresh Fish lovers can treat the palate to the Whole Red**



Snapper, served with Rice and a salad.

**For entertainment, Casa Tua Barcelona offers rhythms of salsa & bolero & Cha Cha Cha performed by a live band every Saturday Nights! El Latin Son will perform tonight!!**

All days of the week we serve Cold and Hot tapas as appetizers or the delicious Iberian Ham Pata Negra which we import directly from Andalucía. As your main course you could choose our Paella, traditionally prepared on the spot by our chef! Combine this Spanish dish with our home-made sangria to complete your dinner.

Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu. If you're into something different we suggest tasting the Espresso Martini Cocktail as dessert, you won't be disappointed.

The best part about such a good ending is that it guarantees you'll be back for more...



**Casa Tua Barcelona Downtown open from 11.30am to 10.30pm, Sunday from 5pm to 11pm tel. 588 5695. Casa Tua Palm Beach open from 5pm to 11pm, tel 586 8470**

### *Fine & Affordable Dining at Pam Pam Restaurant*

## Meet Chef Ludwich Samson and his exquisite menu now unveiled!



Nestled in the quiet neighborhood of Boegoeroei, Perle d'Or apartment complex houses Dutch students and vacationers, as well as a cozy garden eatery, Pam Pam Restaurant & Bar. Aiming to attract a more diverse clientele, Pam Pam has recently adopted a more upscale dining concept. In order to pilot this new concept, rising local chef Ludwich Samson was brought on board, and in just two months on the job, he has

more than proven his worth.

Laid-back, refreshingly young, and ambitious, Ludwich began his career as a chef by enrolling in Aruba's hospitality and culinary arts school—the best decision he has ever made, he wholeheartedly claims. With ten years in the kitchen and three years as a chef, Ludwich has developed an impressive arsenal of cooking skills. He attributes the majority of his growth as a chef to his years

of working under his mentor, Vittorio Muscarllo, owner of Hostaria Da'Vittorio and one of the most highly respected chefs on Aruba.

In his two months with Pam Pam, Ludwich has entirely remodeled the kitchen to make it more efficient. He has also created a whole new menu featuring particularly unique dishes in order to distinguish Pam Pam from the endless number of restaurants along Aruba's hotel strip. While the menu still offers Dutch snacks and typical Dutch platters like sate to appease the many Dutch interns residing at Perle d'Or, the rest of the menu offers upscale fusion cuisine. Lemon grass and chillies give several seafood dishes a Thai flair; homemade ravioli and beef carpaccio salute Italy; crustacean ceviche adds a Peruvian element; and Indonesian spices add zest to a handful of casual main dishes.

Ludwich also craftily adds little unexpected twists to some classic dishes, elevating the uniqueness of his menu. One of his personal favorites is his porcini-crusted filet mignon served with a thyme red-wine reduction. He also delights in the fact that most diners have a hard time figuring out the sweet and spicy deliciousness of his signature crustacean platter. Other interesting interpretations include lump-crab lollipops, chicken cordon blue unorthodoxly stuffed with ricotta and bacon, and for dessert, tiramisu that promises an untraditional layer of decadent Bailey's chocolate mousse.

Needless to say, Ludwich is creative in the kitchen and works extremely hard, currently putting in 12 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week; but he insists that this is not what makes a good chef good. "I simply love what



I do for a living," confides Ludwich, and this is what guarantees success in the kitchen and contented diners. Of course, being a chef can be downright stressful, but Ludwich thrives on the rush of adrenaline on busy nights. And when he peers out of the kitchen and sees a restaurant full of people enjoying their meals, he experiences immense satisfaction. For reservations call: 5877710 or 7483848, or visit us at [www.pampamaruba.com](http://www.pampamaruba.com). □





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Photo by Diane Keijzer

# Glittering holiday gala for The Westin Resort associates



PALM BEACH - This past Thursday evening, the associates and management of The Westin Resort, Aruba held their annual holiday dinner gala. The year-end gala is always a grand affair to remember for the resort staff, and this year was no exception.

Held in the Palm Beach Ballroom, grand buffets of traditional holiday fare were open all evening for guests to graze over, while live music and dancing carried the affair late into the evening. The holiday gala is just one of many events coordinated for associates



throughout the year-softball tournaments, soccer matches, and family days are some of the many fun activities enjoyed. Team work and respect are essential ingredients to the culture of The Westin Resort, Aruba and these activities organized outside of work are instrumental in bringing the

associates from a cross-section of all departments together in a fun, relaxed, and festive atmosphere. It is surely part of why The Westin Resort, Aruba is heralded as a leader in employee satisfaction and retention on the island. □



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# Amazonia Churrascaria continues to serve the local community



**PALM BEACH --** On the eve of the restaurant's 10th anniversary, Amazonia Churrascaria continues to serve the local community, hosting parties big and small.



General Manager Hubert Solagnier reports that on any given night Amazonia Churrascaria continues to cater to local businesses delivering over 40 frequently-changing salads on the salad bar, and 15 types of grilled meats, served by a team of



waiters who are entertainers as well as carvers. Pictured here a group of Colegio Arubano students, the great gangers as they call themselves, enjoying delicious food and celebrating the upcoming holidays, also Roger van Riet and his staff of Alno Eurokitchen, and colleague lawyers of VanEps Kunneman VanDoorne, with a common denominator, a fondness of Amazonia's kitchen. □

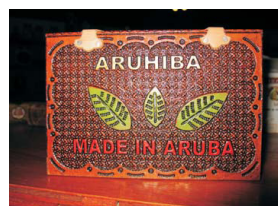


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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba.

Petrocchi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is specially designed for the cigars with the logo "Aruhiba". Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars. The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill. Open on Sunday from 9am to 8pm. And also at Tamarijn Hotel open from 9am to 1pm. Aruhiba is only available in above mentioned stores. Visit our authentic tobacco farm where cigars are handmade.



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At La Cabana Beach & Racquet Club

# Time for action sheds dozens of pounds



from the Housekeeping department, losing 24 pounds!

Giovanni explained that he kept to his meal-plan which consisted mostly of fruits and vegetables. He also worked out on a daily basis and managed to burn a total of 1,000 calories per workout. Giovanni is now committed to continue working-out and living a healthy life style.

Giovanni received his prizes from General Manager Joe Najjar and Associate Relations Manager, Greta de Cuba, presented with a trophy in the form of an apple, a weekend

stay at the Westin Aruba Resort, 6 months membership at the Health Club and the total reimbursement of the weight loss fee.

On behalf of La Cabana Beach & Racquet Club Management & Staff congratulations to the winners and to all who participated. □



EAGLE BEACH -- Three month ago a flyer titled "Time for Action," advertised an in-house weight loss program, for the duration of 12 weeks, at La Cabana Beach & Racquet Club.

A total of 20 participants signed up for the program, making use of the Health Club to work out, receiving a special meal plan and working hard to reach their goal by the end of the year.

The final results were announced during a short celebration, with the total of 15 participants who made it till the end.

Outstanding winner was Giovanni Britten from the Accounting department with a total loss of 36 pounds, followed by Nilda Echobardo



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# Decenas de ecuatorianos protestan por suspensión de canal de TV



Manifestantes protestan frente de la estación de televisión Teleamazonas en Quito, 22 dic 2009. REUTERS/Juan Jose Franco

QUITO (Reuters) - Decenas de ecuatorianos se apostaban el miércoles en las inmediaciones del canal privado Teleamazonas para pedir respeto a la libertad de expresión en el país, mientras el Gobierno defendía la decisión de suspender temporalmente al medio de comunicación. La Superintendencia de Telecomunicaciones sancionó la víspera al canal, un crítico a las políticas del Gobierno, con la suspensión de su señal por tres días por transmitir meses atrás una noticia “sin sustento”, que pudo haber causado conmoción entre la población. Gremios y organismo relacionados con la actividad periodística convocaban a la población a realizar

concentraciones en las calles de Quito, en medio de una polarización de los ecuatorianos sobre la sanción y la necesidad de una regulación a los medios de comunicación. Los periodistas y empleados del canal acudieron a sus oficinas, aunque no lograron transmitir los noticieros mediante la página en internet o su señal internacional. Los vehículos que transitan por las calles donde está ubicado el canal tocaban sus bocinas al pasar en señal de apoyo al medio.

Las autoridades también suspendieron a una radio comunitaria administrada por comunidades indígenas, acusándola de llamar a la agitación a la población durante un paro amazónico. Los principales diarios del país se sumaron al rechazo de parte de la población y en sus editoriales cuestionaron la decisión del ente de control, argumentando que se trata de un atentado a la libertad de expresión.

“Golpe a la libertad de expresión. La sanción contra dos medios, el día en que se debía debatirse la Ley de Comunicación, echa sombras sobre el ejercicio de los derechos en el país”, dijo diario El Comercio en su

editorial.

El presidente izquierdista Rafael Correa defendió la suspensión temporal del canal, argumentando que la ley se debe aplicar para todos. “Porque son poderosos creen que no se va a aplicar la ley (...) La Superintendencia es una autoridad autónoma y puede tomar sus decisiones”, dijo Correa durante un recorrido de obras en la porteña ciudad de Guayaquil.

El mandatario en declaraciones públicas había solicitado la suspensión del medio por 90 días, acusándolo de tergiversar información sobre las actividades del Gobierno. Otros medios también son blanco de las críticas del mandatario, quien los califica de “mentirosos” y “corruptos”.

Los directivos de Teleamazonas han calificado de ilegal la sanción y han dicho que tiene sospechas de que la medida fue ordenada por el mandatario. La resolución del ente de control se adoptó en momentos en que la Asamblea Nacional inició el debate de un polémico proyecto de ley que plantea la creación de un consejo estatal para fijar políticas de comunicación y sancionar a los medios y periodistas. □

## Hondureño Zelaya celebrará Navidad refugiado en embajada Brasil

TEGUCIGALPA (Reuters) - El depuesto presidente de Honduras Manuel Zelaya pasará la Navidad con su familia en la Embajada de Brasil en Tegucigalpa, que ha sido su refugio durante meses luego del golpe de estado en junio.

Los soldados que vigilan los alrededores de la casa diplomática permitirán a los familiares de Zelaya introducir platillos tradicionales de su natal provincia de Olancho.

“En ocasión de la Navidad, los militares han dicho que van a pasar mi madre y mis hijos y vamos a estar aquí con ellos en una oración por el pueblo hondureño”, dijo Zelaya el martes a Reuters en una entrevista telefónica desde la embajada en la que ha pasado los últimos tres meses.

Zelaya, quien fue derrocado el 28 de junio cuando soldados lo expulsaron del país a punta de fusil, ha permanecido en una suerte de limbo político desde que se infiltró de vuelta a Honduras en septiembre. Su futuro es incierto, luego de que los hondureños eligieron a un nuevo presidente en noviembre.

El Gobierno de facto designado tras el golpe y las tropas militares controlan qué y quienes tienen acceso a la embajada que aloja a Zelaya, a su esposa y a un decreciente número de seguidores.

Ni árbol de Navidad ni artículos decorativos han sido introducidos a la embajada para estimular el ánimo en esta temporada de fiestas.

“A ninguna familia le gustaría estar pasando lo que pasa mi familia a menos que sean perversos, crueles o desalmados”, dijo Zelaya.

Sus hijos probablemente le lleven una cena con cerdo y una variedad local de tamales - una suerte de pan de maíz cocinado al vapor dentro de hojas de plátano- acompañado de un vino tradicional elaborado en Olancho, dijo un ayudante.

Zelaya fue depuesto luego de que causó la molestia de líderes empresariales y miembros más conservadores de su partido al estrechar sus lazos con el presidente de Venezuela, el izquierdista Hugo Chávez. □

## Anuncian a Vargas Llosa en acto de candidato chileno

SANTIAGO DE CHILE (AP) - El escritor peruano Mario Vargas Llosa participará en un acto de campaña del candidato derechista Sebastián Piñera, informó su comando.

Vargas Llosa encabezará el 8 de enero un acto cultural de la campaña de Piñera con miras a la segunda vuelta presidencial del 17 de enero. En el acto cultural de la campaña del candidato de la alianza derechista participarán también los escritores chilenos Jorge Edwards, quien recientemente adhirió a Piñera, y Roberto Ampuero, un ex comunista que vivió en Cuba. El escritor peruano y su esposa llegarán a Chile el 7 de enero y se hospedarán en la residencia del acaudalado empresario y candidato presidencial. No es primera que Vargas Llosa interviene en la campaña presidencial chilena, en 1989 apoyó al delfín y ex ministro de Hacienda del entonces dictador Augusto Pinochet, Hernán Buchi. □



# Colombia mantiene operativo militar contra asesinos de gobernador

BOGOTA (AP) - Parientes de un gobernador degollado tras su secuestro a manos de guerrilleros de las FARC, que simulaban ser miembros del ejército que le protegerían de un atentado, afirmaron el miércoles carecer de explicación sobre lo sucedido, excepto que la víctima pudo negarse a un quinto plagio.

Las autoridades no han explicado cómo los guerrilleros lograron su acción en una zona, que como el sureño departamento de Caquetá, cuenta con fuerte presencia militar y que es reconocida como de influencia de las rebeldes Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC).

Familiares aseguraron que el gobernador no había recibido amenazas, pero destacaron al mismo tiempo que en la zona había versiones en torno a un posible ataque armado de las FARC, no contra el gobernador, sino contra algún local público o privado o un atentado a unidades militares.

El gobierno del presidente Alvaro Uribe ratificó el martes por la noche, tras confirmarse el hallazgo del cuerpo del gobernador de Caquetá, Luis Francisco Cuéllar, de 69 años, el operativo militar para dar con los insurgentes que lo secuestraron en su casa en Florencia, capital departamental, a 380

kilómetros al suroeste de Bogotá. Las autoridades mantuvieron la oferta de una recompensa de 1.000 millones de pesos (unos 500.000 dólares) por datos que lleven a los autores del secuestro, perpetrado el lunes cuando el gobernador descansaba y una decena de guerrilleros, vestidos con uniformes camuflados del ejército, pretendió ser una unidad militar que llegaba a protegerlo de un atentado.

El gobernador de Caquetá Luis Francisco Cuéllar, quien fue raptado y asesinado por rebeldes de las FARC, es visto en una foto sin fecha tomada en Florencia distribuida a la prensa. REUTERS/La Nacion/Distribución (COLOMBIA)



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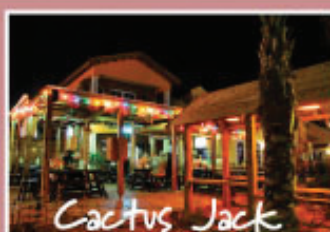


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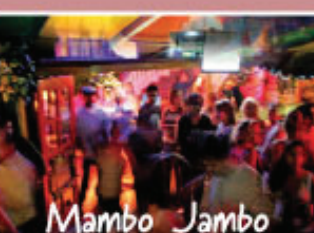
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